

Dr. Van Browne Memorial



DR. VAN BROWNE MEMORIAL

Circle at Pinecrest Drive and South Drive

Van M. Browne, M.D.

1905 – 1985

Family Doctor

Practiced Medicine Locally Since 1933

Dr. Browne graduated from Tufts Medical School in Boston, and then interned at Jackson Memorial Hospital from 1930 through 1931. The tough economic times of the Great Depression caused Dr. Browne to delay starting private practice for a few years since he had been fortunate enough to get a job as a cruise ship doctor.

After working on a ship for two years, he returned in 1933 to open his first small office on Okeechobee Road in “downtown” Hialeah, and relocated his office to Palm Avenue in 1939, where he practiced until his retirement in 1981. He was truly a medical pioneer. The economic times were very tough for local residents, and it was not unusual for him to be paid with a stalk of bananas or some mangos. Once he even delivered a baby to a couple living in an old chicken coop. Although he tried to join the Navy in World War II, he was turned down since he was one of only two doctors serving this area. He tried to enlist again during the Korean conflict, but was turned down because he was too old. When the town was impacted by severe flooding in 1947, Pharmacist John Stadnik kept his pharmacy open with candles and a generator and worked closely with him, ferrying sick and injured patients, vaccines and medications between Miami Springs and Dr. Browne’s office by boat.

Dr. Browne purchased a home on South Drive in Miami Springs early in 1948, where he also maintained a small examination and treatment room for after-hours emergencies. He and his wife Felicia raised their two sons and a daughter there, and remained Miami Springs residents for the rest of their lives. While Dr. Browne first started practicing medicine here, the population of Miami Springs numbered 500 people, and he watched it grow to more than 12,000 over his lifetime. He is remembered for his many good deeds, devoting his life to his patients and making many contributions to the health and well-being of our community.

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